

The PVRC Newsletter

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NEXT MEETING : Monday March 10, 1986

QTH : Fred Laun, K3ZO; see directions
last page

AGENDA : 1. ARRL Contest Reports
2. New meeting QTH for '86-'87
3. Summer Meeting Plans

CONTESTS: Virginia QSO Party, March 8-9
CQ WPX Phone March 29-30

It was good to tune across the bands during the ARRL CW contest and hear so many PVRC calls. Scotty KØDQ at W3GRF, and Fred K3ZO, battled it out for top single operator/all band honors on the national level with ex-PVRCer John, KIAR. The final outcome won't be known for some time, but it looks like Scotty might have won it for the country, with John and Fred very close behind. Both Scotty and Fred had a QSO count up around 1700. John was around 1600, but seems to have enough multipliers to make up the difference.

How many times have two hams in the same small suburb (Temple Hills) come in the top three like this? Congratulations to all three of you for a superb job.

While the propagation seems to favor areas south of New England this time, apparently it wasn't far enough south to help the crew at W3LPL. They reported generally poor conditions, and several multi/multi's appear to have done a little better, led by N2ME (at the QTH of K3JLT).

There were several other multi-operator stations active during ARRL CW in various classes, such as those at K3ZZ and W3USS. And I'm sorry I don't have anything near a complete list of single operators so I won't even try to mention all of the efforts here. I hope you'll check into the PVRC net after each contest so that I'll know the extent of your activity. I know from our first net this week that we had as many people listening without checking in as actually checked in. Come on in and share your impressions of conditions and what you've picked up on scores.

On the subject of a new meeting site, I'm sorry to report that I have not been able to compile a list of proposed sites and a questionnaire in time for this mailing. As many of you know, a death in my family has kept me tied up quite a bit this last month, and preparation for the CW and phone contests has used up a significant amount of time. But I do expect to have the options ready for our March 10 meeting and want to thank those of you who have volunteered definite meeting places for us. We have at least three definite sites to propose that pretty well cover the entire D.C. Beltway area : Temple Hills , Reston, and Ashton (?). If you have another, call me now!

Dave, K3ZJ

MEMBER ADS

--TOWER WORK: Safe, reasonable, reliable. Contact Wayne Hillenbrand, N2FB, 1008 Lee Jackson Dr, Lothian, MD 20711, phone (301) 627-1166.

LOG DUPING ON THE APPLE COMPUTER AT W3FG, THE FIRST TWO YEARS de Walt McGugan, W3FG

(Alternate title: HOW TO AVOID TAKING OUT THE GARBAGE)

Not all that long ago, the "High Speed Dash" was an integral part of the goings-on at the W3LPL multi - multi station immediately following the end of a major DX contest. Being a new member of the W3LPL crew at the time, I figured everyone was in a hurry to pack up their rig and load their car so they could rush back in to hear the claimed scores starting to come in on both 2 meters and the HF gathering frequency. (In the words of APPLESOFT, Apple's name for it's BASIC Programming language, this is referred to as a LOGICAL ERROR). I soon learned from experience that the object of the "High Speed Dash" was to disappear before Frank could shove a stack of logs and a piece of paper at you and say "Dupe these!"

Being the proud owner of a new Apple //e system, I accepted the task. After all, this is the kind of thing home computers should be great at. A few lines of BASIC code, and the log could be duped in no time. No problem! (LOGICAL ERROR #2).

The way I looked at it, log duping should be a fairly straightforward process. The duping program I planned would let you type in callsigns from the keyboard. The program would then store the calls in a string array. (A string is computer talk for a variable that contains alpha-numeric data as opposed to numbers). Every so often, say every 100 QSOs or so, the program should check for dupes. I did this by comparing a callsign to each one typed in before it. This procedure turned out to be very inefficient, but easy to program. Besides, at the time I didn't know any better. If the program found a dupe, a plus sign (+) was added at the beginning of the callsign and a message was displayed on the monitor stating where in the log the dupe was found. The callsigns were written to disk every so often to prevent all of your work from being lost if the power failed. This also meant you didn't have to type in an entire band's worth of callsigns in one sitting. After typing in all the callsigns and identifying the dupes, the file containing the calls would be sorted. The callsigns with a plus sign in front of them (the dupes) would sort to the top. Then, using a few simple lines of code to format the output text, the file would be printed to the dot matrix printer stating with the first callsign that didn't have a plus sign in front of it. This print-out would be the dupesheet that is turned in with your contest logs.

The BASIC code for all of the above was fairly easy to write. Rather than re-invent the wheel, I searched through a few magazines looking for a sort routine. I found an article called "WONDER SORT". Sounded good to me! Before writing the full duping program, I typed in the "WONDER SORT" routine (which was written in BASIC) and tested it with 25 random callsigns. The routine sorted them in less than 2 seconds! I figured 1000 callsigns would therefore take no more than 80 seconds or so to sort. (LOGICAL ERROR #3).

After typing in my duping program, I started with the W3LPL 20 meter logs -- about 1000 or so QSOs. Things ran smoothly, and fairly quickly, for the first few hundred QSOs, but started to slow down after that. My